



## OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITOR

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### **THE INDEPENDENT MONITOR ANNOUNCES THE ISSUANCE OF “THE DENVER REPORT ON USE OF DEADLY FORCE”**

The Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) publicly released a report commissioned by the OIM and prepared by the Los Angeles-based consultancy group, the “Police Assessment Resource Center” (PARC) relating to the policies and procedures of the Denver Police Department involving the use of deadly and seriously injurious force and the investigation and administrative review of officer-involved shootings. The report details a best-practices evaluation of current deadly and seriously injurious force policies and also evaluates how the DPD investigated and reviewed officer involved shootings during the period from 1999 through 2003.

Information regarding PARC can be found on its website, located at [www.parc.info](http://www.parc.info).

The mission of the OIM is to provide fair and objective oversight of the Denver Police and Sheriff Departments and ensure transparency and accountability. The OIM is responsible for (1) monitoring and participating in investigations of sworn police and sheriff personnel; (2) making recommendations to the Manager of Safety, Chief of Police and Undersheriff/Director of Corrections regarding case findings and discipline; and (3) making broader policy recommendations.

“This report demonstrates the City of Denver’s commitment to providing transparency and accountability to the public relating to the Denver Police Department’s efforts to police itself and hold its employees accountable for their conduct,” said Independent Monitor Richard Rosenthal. “I am pleased to report that PARC has found that “the Denver Police Department (DPD) today meets and even exceeds national standards in many areas, making the DPD one of a handful of American police departments establishing themselves as national leaders. PARC also noted that, taken as a whole, DPD use-of-force policies comport with and often exceed national standards – with an unusual and laudable sensitivity about uses of force against people with mental or developmental disabilities and in a state of crisis.”

Rosenthal continued: “PARC specifically complimented Mayoral-initiated reforms that have taken place since 2004 as well as the Manager of Safety’s work in publicly reporting on the results of administrative reviews of officer-involved shootings involving fatalities since these reforms were put into place. Chief Whitman was also specifically commended for his ongoing goals and aspirations for the DPD. In addition, the District Attorney’s work in this area was recognized as amongst the most thorough in the nation.”

In the concluding paragraph of the report, PARC stated that “[t]he combined efforts of the Mayor, the Manager of Safety, the Chief of Police, the Independent Monitor, the Citizen Oversight Board and the Denver District Attorney’s Office have brought about notable improvements and advances in the DPD. The right people are in the right places to make these positive changes permanent and to continue building a force providing effective, respectful, and accountable policing to all persons in the City and County of Denver.”

PARC also made a number of recommendations for improvements in DPD policies and procedures, including:

- Placing otherwise excellent foot pursuit training into the DPD’s policy manual.
- Updating the DPD policy regarding shooting at fleeing felons to require an “imminent threat” before deadly force can be used.
- Creating a policy governing when an officer can draw his or her weapon and requiring use-of-force reporting under such circumstances.
- Placing additional restrictions on when an officer is permitted to shoot at a moving vehicle.
- Placing additional restrictions on the use of impact weapons.
- Establishing clear expectations when medals are given as the result of officer-involved shootings.
- Modifying officer survival training to ensure it is consistent with the tenets of community-oriented policing.

PARC also identified a number of concerns as to the adequacy of officer-involved shooting investigations and administrative reviews conducted from 1999 through 2003. It does appear, however, that the vast majority of PARC’s concerns have been addressed by current practices adopted by the DPD before and since the creation of the Independent Monitor’s Office.

The PARC report can be accessed online at [www.denvergov.org/oim](http://www.denvergov.org/oim).